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PSC ASKS UTILITIES TO REPORT ON  
YEAR 2000 COMPUTER STATUS

The Public Service Commission has asked utilities to report on their preparation for the Year 2000 problem. This problem arises when computer systems that identify calendar years only by the last two digits are not able to distinguish between the years 2000 and 1900. In addition to

computer systems, much equipment contains embedded date-sensitive chips.

Said Commissioner Bob Anderson, the PSC's Year 2000 team leader, "It would be devastating if our electricity, telephone, and natural gas systems failed on New Year's Eve, 1999. Our entire economy and society depend on these systems."

The PSC will use the utilities' reports to determine whether the Year 2000 problem is being adequately addressed. Said Anderson, "The PSC and utility customers must have confidence that no utility disruptions will occur, especially since the date change will occur in the middle of Montana's winter heating season."

The PSC has asked utilities to report by September 16th and quarterly thereafter.

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